



CITY OF HENDERSONVILLE DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Operations Center - Assembly Room | 305 Williams St. | Hendersonville NC 28792
Tuesday, November 15, 2022 – 5:30 PM

MINUTES

Present: Jayne Jennings, Chair, Vice-Chair, Laura Bannister, Josh Williams, Nancy Diaz, Eric Gash, and Melinda Lowrance

Absent: Florence Allbaugh

Liaisons Present: Mayor Barbara G. Volk, and Mayor Pro Tem Lyndsey Simpson

Staff Present: City Manager John Connet, City Clerk Jill Murray, and Communications Manager Allison Justus

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Jayne Jennings called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. with a quorum of members in attendance.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Committee Member Melinda Lowrance moved to approve the agenda as presented. Laura Banister seconded the motion. A unanimous vote of the Committee followed. Motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Approval of September 13, 2022 Minutes- Angela Reece, City Clerk

Committee Member Laura Banister moved to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2022 meeting as amended with one change. Change the spelling of Leslie Carey's last name in two places.. Nancy Diaz seconded the motion. A unanimous vote of the Committee followed. Motion carried.

City Manager Connet suggested that they go through Old Business, New Business and Other Business prior to the presentation so as to get everything out of the way first.

5. OLD BUSINESS

City Manager John Connet said they are still working on the Apology Resolution Subcommittees and they will address it at the next meeting.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. Adoption of 2023 Annual Schedule of Meetings.

Committee Member Laura Bannister mentioned that she will miss the July meeting.

Committee Member Laura Banister moved to approve the 2023 Annual Schedule of Meetings as presented. Josh Williams seconded the motion. A unanimous vote of the Committee followed. Motion carried.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

City Manager Connet said as we are getting ready for 2023, think about how we recognize diversity. We want to kick that off in February. It will be Black History Month and I would like to toss this idea out to recognize historical places in the community. Historical schools, churches, homes, communities etc., and talk about the history. So any suggestions you may have for next year, the City supports all businesses so focus on historical or institutional.

Committee Chair Jayne Jennings asked if we could start recording our meetings? Mr. Connet said yes, starting in January, we will record all meetings.

Before Bahiyyah Greer began her presentation, City Manager Connet said we need to work on policies and have conversations so that we are inclusive. We will be having more focus groups in the future and will eventually have something to bring to Council. That is the work of Ahkirah.

B. Presentation of Intercultural Development Inventory Results – Bahiyyah Greer, AHKIRAH Consulting.

Bahiyyah Greer presented her City of Hendersonville Assessment Report via Zoom. This report showed the results after the administrators (15 of them) in the City sat for the IDI last month. After reviewing the data from the group, her preliminary determination and interpretation is the Hendersonville Administration has both monocultural mindsets and intercultural mindsets at work and without targeted, intercultural competence development for group members, it is likely the group will find it difficult to achieve a “shared vision and focus” for meeting operational objectives in a culturally diverse environment. There will be final results that will go in front of Council once everyone has completed the IDI.

City Manager John Connet added regarding the cultural fit, it’s interesting how this data correlates to our own struggles in our organization, particularly as we’ve grown and added capacity in our organization. Our HR Department is constantly pushing our departments to be very aggressive and look for diverse hiring/recruitment. It is a constant battle. We are a very heavy male organization for example so we’re pushing our engineering teams and public works teams to diversify. That’s how we’re using this data.

Committee Member Melinda Lowrance asked about nepotism in the City. Mr. Connet said that we do have family members that are a part of our organization, and we work hard to make sure that family members are not supervising family members. I make sure to tell our folks that that is ok as long as they are the most qualified person for the job.

Eric Gash mentioned that he likened this to looking at a game film. Unless you look at that film and see that you could have done better, we won’t get better. The age difference really stuck out to me and having a 23 year old’s perspective vs. a 73 year old’s perspective. How do we attract the younger generation to come here? There’s growing pains. Change is tough. Patience and time will tell the tale.

Bahiyyah expressed gratitude for being able to make the presentation and asked for full participation in completing the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI).

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Jayne Jennings adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

Jayne Jennings, Chair

ATTEST:

Jill Murray, City Clerk